



RED RIVER/ DEVILS LAKE BASIN

Land and Water Stewardship



Watershed Resource Issues:

- International issues related to compliance with Boundary Waters Treaty between the US and Canada including water quality, water quantity, and biota transfer, Devils Lake outlet and inlet issues, inter-basin water diversion projects, and coordination with the State Department.
- Wetlands draining, preservation, restoration, and outreach.
- Continued building in the floodplain, wetlands draining for farming, and nonpoint pollution discharge and agricultural issues.
- Threatened and endangered species, wildlife habitat and bird migration.
- Leadership and strategic planning issues among various groups.
- Growth in Fargo.
- Major differences and coordination challenges between ND and MN on source water protection, Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), and monitoring.



Red River of the North

Recent EPA Efforts:

- Promote land stewardship in the Red River/Devils Lake Basin
 - Provide technical assistance and funding for the **watershed**.
 - Funded *Greenway on the Red*, a **600-mile Greenway** project from SD to Lake Winnipeg and coordinated with Rivers West in Manitoba.
 - **Funded Conservation Agriculture** "Farm the Best, Restore the Rest"- to the ND Wetlands Trust.
 - Funded The Nature Conservancy in MN for developing a master plan for the **largest tall-grass prairie restoration in the country** for Glacial Ridge near Crookston. 8000 acres of wetlands restoration and hydrologic improvements.
- Devils Lake **Ecotourism** project. Funded the Consensus Council and US Fish and Wildlife Service for the Lake Region birding trail guide, interpretive kiosk, and a wetlands overlook. Other partners included Audubon, and state and local agencies.
- Funded ND Parks and Recreation for an Ecological Community Survey for Griggs and Nelson Counties.
- **Environmental impact and water quality** reviews for Devils Lake outlet (EPA is a cooperating agency) and Red River Valley Water Supply Study.
- Red River Reconnaissance Study-coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers.
- Riparian restoration and wetland assessment.



Red River of the North watershed area.

EPA Region 8's Ongoing Efforts:

- Encourage a basin management and coordination approach.
- Integration and coordination between various groups.
- Participation in International Joint Commission (IJC) and International Red River Board and aquatic ecosystem health (monitoring, ecological assessment, and reference conditions) and hydrology committees. (Related to the **Boundary Waters Treaty**).
- Funded the Red River Basin Commission for the Watershed Information Network-\$100K from HQ Office of Water in conjunction with the IJC for 2 years to work on **watershed** coordination, **education** and outreach including a quarterly newsletter, and **TMDL** and **source water** coordination. This project is closely coordinated with other EPA funded projects.



Red River flooding in Grand Forks, ND
Photo courtesy of USGS

- **Develop education and outreach partnerships with focus on monitoring efforts.**

- Funded River Keepers-2 **volunteer monitoring** train-the-trainer sessions.
- Funded the Energy and Environmental Research Center (EERC) to lead the Red River **Biological Monitoring** Workgroup to establish protocols for sampling of slow-moving muddy-bottom rivers.
- Funded FM River, working with the EERC, RiverKeepers and Prairie Public Broadcasting on water quality and river public awareness.
- Funded EERC for the Red River Valley **storm water** work group.



Devils Lake flooding

- Funded EERC for the ND **Industrial Pretreatment** Assistance Program.
- Funded Montana Watercourse for Discover a Watershed: The Red River Kids activity booklet.
- Brownfields awareness and Brownfields pilot scoping.
- **Tribal** and **Brownfields** work with Spirit Lake Nation.

Upcoming Issues

- IJC Boundary Waters Treaty Compliance and Canadian concerns about water quality and biota transfer.

For more information about EPA Region's activities in the Red River/Devils Lake basin, please contact Stacey Eriksen at 303-312-6692 or email eriksen.stacey@epa.gov